

Office of Attorney General

NORTH DAKOTA CONCEALED WEAPON LICENSE



Bureau of Criminal Investigation
PO Box 1054
Bismarck, ND 58502-1054
E-mail: ndag@nd.gov

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION.....	1
STATE LAWS.....	8
FEDERAL PROHIBITIONS ON POSSESSION OF WEAPONS.....	9
BASIC HANDGUN USE.....	10
Firearms Safety.....	10
Safety Rules.....	10
Nomenclature.....	12
BASIC INSPECTION GUIDES.....	13
Exterior.....	13
Barrel.....	13
Function.....	13
SHOOTING FUNDAMENTALS.....	13
Breath Control.....	13
Stance.....	13
Grip.....	13
Trigger Pull.....	14
Sighting a Firearm.....	14
Sight Alignment.....	14
Sight Picture.....	15
Adjusting the Sights.....	15
Loading a handgun.....	15
Administrative Unloading.....	15
Reloading.....	16
Malfunctions with a handgun.....	16

GENERAL INFORMATION

APPLICATION FORMS	Application forms are available from the local police department, sheriff's office or certified test administrators. A list of certified test administrators is online at http://www.ag.nd.gov/BCI/CW/CW.htm . Out of state residents may send a written request to the BCI to receive an application form.
APPLICANT STATUS	Effective August 1, 2009, an applicant for licensure or renewal must be a citizen of the United States .
TYPE OF LICENSE	There are two types of licenses: Class 1 and Class 2 . The licenses cost the same and are equally valid within North Dakota, but the Class 1 license is accepted in many more states than a Class 2 license. Licenses issued before August 1, 2009, regardless of the age of the license holder, automatically converted to a Class 2 license.
MINIMUM AGE	Applicants must be at least 21 years old to apply for a Class 1 License, or at least 18 years old to apply for a Class 2 License.
THOSE PROHIBITED	Concealed weapon licenses may only be issued to those who legally may possess a firearm or dangerous weapon. Individuals may be prohibited by state or federal law from owning, possessing, or having a firearm under their control.
TESTING, CLASS 1	<p>An applicant for a Class 1 license shall successfully participate in a classroom instruction that sets forth weapon safety rules and the deadly force law of North Dakota, complete an open book test based upon this manual, demonstrate familiarity with a firearm or dangerous weapon, and complete an actual shooting or certified proficiency exercise.</p> <p>Evidence of familiarity with a firearm or dangerous weapon to be concealed may be satisfied by one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certification of familiarity with a firearm or dangerous weapon by an individual who has been certified by the attorney general, which may include a law enforcement officer, military or civilian firearms instructor, hunter safety instructor, or dangerous weapons instructor;• Evidence of equivalent experience with a firearm or dangerous weapon through participation in an organized shooting competition, law enforcement, military service, or dangerous weapon course of training;• Possession of a license from another state to carry a firearm or dangerous weapon, concealed or otherwise, which is granted by that state upon completion of a course described above; or• Evidence that the applicant, during military service, was found to be qualified to operate a firearm or dangerous weapon.

TESTING, CLASS 2	An applicant for a Class 2 license shall successfully complete an open book test based upon this manual.
TESTING SITES	All classroom instruction and testing must be held and completed within the state of North Dakota and cannot be held in conjunction with any other state's testing.
TESTING FEES	The maximum amount a test administrator may charge is \$50.
SIGNATURES REQUIRED	The application must be signed by the Sheriff of the county in which the applicant resides. If the applicant lives in a city with a police department, the application must also be signed by the Chief of Police.
APPLICANT FEES/ PHOTOS/FINGERPRINTS	After successful completion of the required testing, deliver the completed application, two color passport photos and a cashier's check or money order (NO PERSONAL CHECKS) for \$45 made payable to the "ND Attorney General" to the appropriate local law enforcement agency in your city or county of residence. The agency will review the application, obtain fingerprints and conduct a local records check to determine applicant's ability to obtain the license.
APPLICATION SUBMISSION	<p>The application is delivered to the appropriate law enforcement agency(ies) for review and approval, and then submitted to the BCI. A law enforcement agency may either return the form to the applicant to submit to BCI or may submit the application directly to the BCI. This varies from one jurisdiction to the next, so check with the local law enforcement agency.</p> <p>Before delivering the application to law enforcement, check that it is properly completed, dated, signed, and has all required attachments.</p>
BCI RECORD CHECKS	The BCI performs state and national records checks and processes applicant fingerprints through the regional Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
APPLICATION PROCESSING-LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT	State law provides that the sheriff has up to 30 days to process the application. If the applicant lives within a city and that city has a police department, the police department must process the application within 10 working days of receipt by the agency.
APPLICATION PROCESSING-BCI	The BCI must process the application and make a determination within 45 days of receipt of the <i>satisfactorily completed application</i> . Incomplete applications will be returned to applicant. An incomplete application is not deemed submitted to the BCI until it is returned satisfactorily completed.

"SATISFACTORILY
COMPLETED"

An application/renewal form must be *satisfactorily completed* before it can be accepted as submitted to BCI. Please ensure that the form is completed, requested information has been provided, all applicable questions have been answered, the applicant has signed and dated the form, the test administrator section is properly completed, and it has the fee, photographs and fingerprints (as applicable) attached. If the law enforcement agency returns the form to applicant to submit to BCI, before doing so, applicant should make sure the form includes the signature(s) of the required law enforcement official(s).

INCOMPLETE
APPLICATIONS
(THROUGH 12/31/2011)

An incomplete application will be returned to the applicant. An incomplete application is not deemed submitted to the BCI until it is returned satisfactorily completed. Renewal applicants must submit a *satisfactorily completed* renewal form to the BCI within 90 days of the expiration of the license in order to avoid retesting.

INCOMPLETE
APPLICATIONS
(EFFECTIVE 01/01/2012)

An incomplete application will be returned to the applicant. An incomplete application is not deemed submitted to the BCI until it is returned satisfactorily completed. Renewal applicants must return the *satisfactorily completed* renewal form to the BCI **not less than 90 days PRIOR TO the expiration of the license** in order to avoid retesting.

STATUS OF
APPLICATION /
RENEWAL

PLEASE NOTE: The BCI is prohibited by law from providing information about the status of a concealed weapon license application, *even to the applicant. **DO NOT CALL WITH INQUIRIES.***

If the license is not received within 90 days of submitting a satisfactorily completed application, applicant may send written notification (via US Mail) to the BCI that it has not been received. The BCI cannot accept notification by telephone or e-mail.

WEAPON
PURCHASE/NICS
ALTERNATIVE

A National Instant Check System (NICS) background check is completed during the application process and the NICS number printed on the license for a North Dakota resident. The requirement for an NICS check for a firearm purchase by a Class 1 or Class 2 license holder may be waived at the dealer's discretion. The NICS number is not printed on a non-resident's license, so it cannot be used to purchase firearms.

NONRESIDENTS

An individual who is not a resident of North Dakota may apply for a North Dakota concealed weapon license but cannot use the license as an alternate to a NICS check when purchasing firearms.

LICENSE PERIOD

Licenses issued prior to July 1, 2011, are valid for **three** years. Licenses issued on or after July 1, 2011, are valid for **five** years.

INVALID APPLICATIONS
(THROUGH 12/31/2011)

Effective July 1, 2011, BCI will destroy invalid applications. The applicant will receive a notification by mail that the application/renewal was invalid and has been destroyed. The applicant will be required to start the application/renewal process again, including fees and obtaining photographs, fingerprints, etc.

An application is invalid if it:

- It is not the current form. The current form has an issue date of (06/2011).
- It is not an original form issued by the BCI.
- The law enforcement official(s) who signed the application is/are not from the applicant's city and/or county of residence.
- Applicant began the renewal process more than 90 days prior to the license expiration.
- Applicant began the renewal process more than 90 days after the license expired.

The BCI encourages applicants to ensure the application/renewal form is valid and satisfactorily completed before submitting it.

INVALID APPLICATIONS
(EFFECTIVE 01/01/2012)

BCI will destroy invalid applications. The applicant will receive a notification by mail that the application/renewal was invalid and has been destroyed. The applicant will be required to start the application/renewal process again, including fees and obtaining photographs, fingerprints, etc.

An application is INVALID and will be destroyed if:

- It is not the current form. The current form has an issue date of (06/2011).
- It is not an original form issued by the BCI.
- The law enforcement official(s) who signed the application is/are not from the applicant's city and/or county of residence.
- Applicant submitted a renewal form to the BCI more than **180 DAYS PRIOR** to the license expiration.
- Applicant submitted a satisfactorily completed renewal application to the BCI **FEWER THAN 90 DAYS BEFORE THE DATE OF EXPIRATION OF THE LICENSE.**

The BCI encourages applicants to ensure the application/renewal form is valid and satisfactorily completed before submitting it.

RENEWAL PROCESS

No testing is required for *timely* renewal of a Class 2 license. A Class 2 license may be upgraded to a Class 1 license upon successful completion of all Class 1 requirements. A Class 1 license may be renewed upon successful completion of all class 1 testing requirements (including the proficiency test) within one year before submission to the BCI of a *satisfactorily completed* renewal application.

RENEWAL PERIOD
(THROUGH 12/31/2011)

NOTE: THE RENEWAL
PROCESS CHANGES
JANUARY 1, 2012

Timely renewal is the responsibility of the license holder. The BCI does not send out license expiration or renewal reminders. The renewal process may be started no more than 90 days prior to license expiration and up to 90 days after expiration. If a license holder fails to begin the renewal process within the 90-day grace period after the expiration date, the individual may not “renew” the license; instead, the individual must re-apply by taking the written test, getting fingerprinted, etc.

An incomplete renewal application will be returned by the BCI to the applicant. An incomplete application is not deemed to have been submitted to the BCI until *after* it has been returned *satisfactorily completed*. Therefore, the BCI recommends the applicant start the renewal process before the license expires in order to avoid the risk of the 90-day grace period expiring before the applicant can return a satisfactorily completed application. *If your license expires during the renewal process, you cannot carry concealed until you receive the new license.*

RENEWAL PERIOD
(EFFECTIVE 1/1/2012)

Timely renewal is the responsibility of the license holder. The BCI does not send out license expiration or renewal reminders.

THE LICENSE IS INVALID THE DAY AFTER IT EXPIRES. THERE IS NO GRACE PERIOD. An invalid license cannot be renewed.

- An application for renewal may be delivered to law enforcement **BETWEEN 180 DAYS AND 90 DAYS BEFORE THE LICENSE EXPIRATION DATE.**
- It takes up to 90 days for local law enforcement and the BCI to complete the renewal processing. **THEREFORE, IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED A TIMELY RENEWAL, an APPLICATION MUST BE DELIVERED TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT NOT LESS THAN 90 DAYS BEFORE THE DATE OF EXPIRATION OF THE LICENSE.**
- FAILURE TO DELIVER the renewal application to local law enforcement **AT LEAST 90 DAYS** prior to the license expiration date may result in the DENIAL of the application by the BCI as untimely – the license holder will be required to re-apply as a new applicant and complete all testing.
- An incomplete renewal application will be returned by the BCI to the applicant. An incomplete application is not deemed to have been submitted to the BCI until *after* it has been returned *satisfactorily completed*. Therefore, the BCI recommends the applicant start the renewal process *as soon as allowed* to avoid the risk of the license expiring before the applicant can return a

satisfactorily completed application.

EXPIRED LICENSE	IF THE LICENSE HAS EXPIRED, DO NOT CARRY CONCEALED! If the license has expired, it is not a valid license . It is a <i>criminal offense to carry a concealed weapon without a valid license</i> . A license holder must be able to produce a valid concealed weapon license upon demand at all times while carrying concealed.
DENIAL	An application for, or renewal of, a concealed weapon license may be denied if the applicant is prohibited by state or federal law from possessing any weapon or if the applicant made a material false statement on the application.
REVOCATIONS	Once issued, a concealed weapon license may be revoked if an individual becomes prohibited by state or federal law from possessing a firearm, or if another valid reason to revoke a license exists. Examples include: a criminal violation while the permit holder was in the possession of a concealed weapon, a conviction of any weapons law, false statements on the renewal application, etc.
ADDRESS CHANGE	<p>License holders are required to submit a change of address in writing via regular mail to the BCI within 30 days after an address change. The notification must include license holder's name, license number, old address and new address.</p> <p>Upon request of the license holder, the BCI will issue an updated license. There is no charge for an updated license, but the old license must be returned to the BCI before the updated one can be issued. Generally it takes about 2 weeks for a license to be reissued. For security reasons, the BCI will not accept change of address notification by e-mail or telephone.</p>
LOST OR DESTROYED LICENSES	If a license is lost or destroyed, a replacement may be obtained from BCI. Send a written request to the BCI indicating the license holder's name, address, date of birth, and the reason a replacement is needed. There is no charge for a replacement license.
RESTORATION OF FIREARM PRIVILEGES	<p>Beginning August 1, 2011, an individual who has been convicted of a non-violent felony offense or a misdemeanor offense may petition the court for restoration of firearm privilege. The petition may be granted only if the individual has (1) paid all fines & fees, (2) served all terms of imprisonment, (3) successfully completed all conditions of parole & probation and (4) the individual's record and reputation do not indicate he would be a danger to the safety of others.</p> <p>For more information, or to initiate a petition, contact an attorney in private practice. The Office of Attorney General (and the BCI) are</p>

prohibited from providing legal advice or assistance to the public and therefore cannot provide any further information about this process.

RECIPROCITY North Dakota has “reciprocity” with many, but not all, other states. This means that a North Dakota concealed weapon license is valid while in those states, and licenses from those states are recognized as valid in North Dakota. BCI maintains a list of states with which North Dakota has reciprocity, at <http://www.ag.nd.gov/BCI/CW/CW.htm>

Reciprocity with another state may be conditional; for example, if the other state has a residency requirement, that state may recognize ND licenses held by ND residents but not those held by non-residents.

It is the responsibility of the license holder to review the laws of both the issuing state and reciprocal state to ensure full compliance.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT/RENEWAL APPLICANT TO COMPLY FULLY WITH ALL RULES, REGULATIONS, AND PROCESSES RELATING TO APPLYING FOR A LICENSE TO CARRY A CONCEALED WEAPON.

IT IS THE CONCEALED WEAPON LICENSE HOLDER’S DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.

THE OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE BCI ARE PROHIBITED BY LAW FROM PROVIDING LEGAL ADVICE OR ASSISTANCE TO THE PUBLIC. FOR AN INTERPRETATION OF STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS AND THEIR APPLICABILITY, CONTACT AN ATTORNEY IN PRIVATE PRACTICE.

STATE LAWS

The questions on the open book test are taken from the information appearing in the relevant chapters of the North Dakota Century Code. Please carefully review this information. All applicants must achieve a score of 70% overall and 100% on the deadly force law in order to pass the test.

Clicking on the links below will open each one in a separate window. The North Dakota Century Code is available for review online <http://www.legis.nd.gov/information/statutes/cent-code.html>

A hard copy of the complete text of Title 62.1 (Weapons) and Chapter 12.1-05 (Justification) will be provided by the Certified Test Administrator at the time of testing, and is included in the testing fee.

TITLE 62.1, WEAPONS

CHAPTER 62.1-01 DEFINITIONS – GENERAL PROVISIONS

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t62-1c01.pdf>

CHAPTER 62.1-02 POSSESSION OF WEAPONS

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t62-1c02.pdf>

CHAPTER 62.1-03 HANDGUNS

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t62-1c03.pdf>

CHAPTER 62.1-04 CONCEALED WEAPONS

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t62-1c04.pdf>

CHAPTER 62.1-05 MACHINE GUNS, AUTOMATIC RIFLES, SILENCERS, BOMBS

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t62-1c05.pdf>

CHAPTER 12.1-05 (JUSTIFICATION)

CHAPTER 12.1-05 JUSTIFICATION

<http://www.legis.nd.gov/cencode/t12-1c05.pdf>

FEDERAL PROHIBITIONS ON POSSESSION OF WEAPONS

Section 62.1-04-03 of the North Dakota Century Code (N.D.C.C.) provides that a concealed weapon license may not be issued to any applicant who is prohibited under federal law from owning, possessing, or having a firearm under that person's control. Because federal law may change after the printing and distribution of this manual, it is the responsibility of the concealed weapon license holder or applicant to be familiar with, and to comply with, all current federal laws regarding the purchase, possession, and use of firearms and dangerous weapons.

The following explanation is provided for convenience and is current as of the printing of this manual (June 2011).

A person prohibited from owning, possessing, or having a firearm under that person's control under Title 18 USC 922(g)(1) through (9) and subsection (n) if the person:

1. has been convicted in any court of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year;
 2. is a fugitive from justice;
 3. is an unlawful user of or addicted to any controlled substance;
 4. has been adjudicated mentally defective or who has been committed to a mental institution;
 5. is an illegal or unlawful alien or was admitted to the United States under a non-immigrant visa;
 6. has been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions;
 7. has renounced US citizenship;
 8. is the subject of a protection or restraining order;
 9. has been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence; or
- Subsection (n): is under indictment or information for a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.

NOTE:

Items 1 and subsection (n): in many states this refers to "felony" offenses but it can also apply to specific misdemeanors in some states.

Item 2: The person has an active misdemeanor or felony warrant in any state.

Item 3: The person has been convicted for use or possession of a controlled substance within the past year; or has multiple arrests for use or possession of a controlled substance within the past five years and the most recent arrest occurred within the past year; or has been arrested for use or possession of a controlled substance within the past year and the substance tested positive for a controlled substance.

Item 4: It has been determined by a court, board, commission or other lawful authority that the person, as a result of marked subnormal intelligence, or mental illness, incompetence, condition or disease, (1) is a danger to self or others, or (2) lacks the mental capacity to contract or manage their own affairs.

Item 5: Effective August 1, 2009, North Dakota law requires that all applicants for licensure or renewal must be a citizen of the United States.

BASIC HANDGUN USE

FIREARMS SAFETY

YOU are ultimately responsible for your weapons, at home, at a shooting range and everywhere else. This includes cleaning, dry-firing and storage of the weapons. There is no such thing as an “accidental discharge,” only an unintentional discharge! It wasn’t an accident; someone didn’t practice safety.

SAFETY RULES

The eight cardinal rules:

- (1) **TREAT EVERY WEAPON AS IF IT IS LOADED.**
Never point any weapon at anything you do not intend to shoot. Most unintentional discharges occur as a result of someone thinking it was unloaded, but it goes off anyway.
- (2) **A loaded weapon in the home has a much greater danger potential than an unloaded weapon.**
Many people feel that they need to have loaded weapons within reach in their homes for security reasons. This is close to paranoia! Weapons should be unloaded and locked to prevent children from being able to operate them. It doesn’t take long to load a weapon for use.
- (3) **Never put your finger on the trigger until you are ready to fire.**
Many people have had a gun discharge in the holster because they place their finger on the trigger as they are drawing or holstering the weapon. The weapon can’t go off without the trigger being pulled.
- (4) **Every time a weapon is given to you, check that weapon to see if it is loaded.**
Open the cylinder or action, then look and feel to make sure it is empty. Many semi-automatic pistols can shoot even if the magazine is out. Open the cylinder or action, then look and feel to make sure it is empty.
- (5) **Never depend on the mechanical safety device.**
Just like everything else that is mechanical, safeties may fail. For hunting and sporting activities, having the safety on is a good practice but never depend on it entirely. Keep the weapon pointed in a safe direction at all times with your finger off the trigger and unload and secure it when you are not planning on using it.
- (6) **If a cocked weapon is given to you, the proper procedure to follow is to point the muzzle in a safe direction and carefully let the hammer down.**
To accomplish this with a revolver, the hammer must be held with the thumb of one hand. Once a good grip is on the hammer, pull the trigger slowly to release the hammer. Once the hammer is released, let go of the trigger and slowly let the hammer down to the rest position.

With the current semi-automatic handguns, this may be easily accomplished. First, keep the weapon pointed in a safe direction and remove the magazine from the magazine well. Then work the slide to the rear and lock it in the open position. Look and feel to ensure there is nothing in the chamber.

- (7) **If you are going to give a weapon to someone else, pass it to them with the magazine out and the action locked back or with the cylinder open.**

Be courteous to others. Show them that you are practicing safety in your actions. Then make sure they check the weapon anyway.

- (8) **For your own safety, you should inspect your own weapons for proper care and maintenance.**

Follow the manufacturer's specifications for care, maintenance and cleaning. Weapons will last a long time if they are cared for properly.

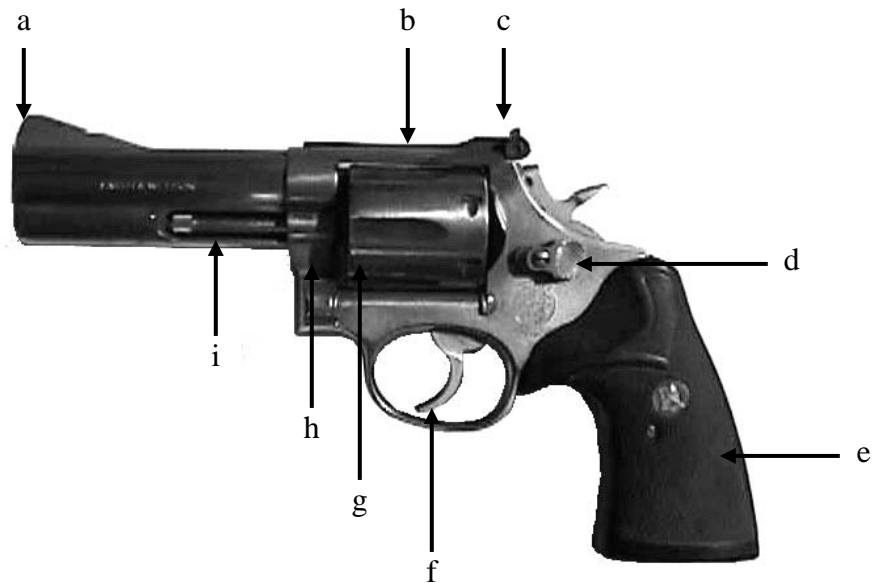
NOMENCLATURE

Figure 1: Pistol



- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------|
| a. Front Sight | b. Slide | c. Stop Notch | d. Slide Stop Lever |
| e. Rear Sight | f. Tang | g. Grip | h. Magazine Catch |
| i. Trigger | j. Slide Lock | k. Trigger Guard | l. Frame |

Figure 2: Revolver



- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| a. Front Sight | b. Top Strap | c. Rear Sight | d. Thumb Piece |
| e. Grip | f. Trigger | g. Cylinder | h. Yoke |
| i. Extractor Rod | | | |

BASIC INSPECTION GUIDES

EXTERIOR

- Make sure that there are no spots of rust or corrosion
- Make sure there are no bulges or bent parts
- Make sure that the weapon is clean
- Make sure that the sights are not loose

BARREL

- Look to see that there is nothing lodged in the barrel
- Look for any deposits and that the barrel is clean

FUNCTION

- Make sure that the weapon functions properly mechanically
 - For a pistol
 - Slide locks back
 - Slide release works
 - Magazine locks in and releases properly
 - For a revolver
 - Cylinder opens and closes properly
 - Cylinder rotates without binding

IF ANY MECHANICAL PROBLEM IS FOUND, take the weapon to a qualified armorer or gunsmith.

SHOOTING FUNDAMENTALS

BREATH CONTROL

There are many schools of thought with hunters and competition shooters depending on the weapon and the type of shooting. The key is not to hold your breath while shooting. The first visible sign of the brain not having enough oxygen is trembling. This does not support good weapon control.

STANCE

Many different stances are available and have been taught in the past including Point shoulder, Weaver and Modified weaver. No matter what the situation, any shooting stance must provide a stable shooting platform.

GRIP

The proper grip differs with the type of handgun being used. For a pistol the hand is placed high on the back of weapon, right under the tang. For a pistol to operate properly the grip strength must be appropriate, otherwise the functioning may be impaired. To find the proper grip strength, grip the weapon until the hand starts to shake, then back off the pressure just until the shaking stops. That is how hard to grip the pistol.

For a revolver, the hand is placed high up on the back strap or grip with the webbing between thumb and trigger finger at very top. The revolver is held just like a friendly hand shake and no more pressure need be applied.

For either handgun, the support hand provides only support and no pressure should be exerted. It provides only support or stability.

The trigger finger should make contact with the trigger with the first segment of the finger. If right handed, the right edge of the trigger should be touching the first joint. If left-handed, the left edge of the trigger should be touching the first joint. Revolver grips may be changed easily and many styles are available so the handgun can be made to fit your hand. Pistol grips are not interchangeable so the placement of the hand may need to be changed in order to get the trigger finger in the proper place.

TRIGGER PULL

You should not know the exact instant a handgun will fire. There are two most common mistakes made while shooting that affect accuracy. The first is to anticipate the gun going off. This is a “flinch” and will cause the bullets to go high. The second and more common mistake is to make the gun go off when you want it to. This is called a “jerk” and will cause the bullets to go low.

The trigger pull for a revolver should be smooth and the end must be a squeeze. For double action take up the first part of the trigger pull, acquire sights, and then squeeze. (pull-sight-squeeze) For single action it is squeeze only. (sight-squeeze) Follow-through is what your trigger finger does after the shot. The proper follow-through is to hold the trigger to the rear until the weapon recovers from recoil.

For single action only pistols the trigger pull is the same as for revolvers. For double/single and full double action pistols, trigger reset should be used. Trigger reset is how far the trigger needs to be let forward in order to reengage the sear so it may be fired again. This is all the farther the trigger need be let forward. The first round fired will be the pull-sight-squeeze but the subsequent shots will be reset-sight-squeeze.

SIGHTING A FIREARM

Which eye should be used for aiming? It is more fundamentally sound that a right-handed shooter use the right eye and a left-handed shooter use the left eye to sight a handgun. For close distances it is also possible to use both eyes.

Most people will have one dominant eye. This does not mean that the other is weaker, only that one will be chosen from habit or preference. If there is a large difference between the eyes, it may not be possible to sight a handgun with both eyes open and not possible to close the dominant eye while keeping the other one open. However, It is possible to learn how to use either eye.

SIGHT ALIGNMENT

There are three components used for sighting



The relationship between the front sight, rear sight and where you want the bullet to strike is called sight alignment. Proper sight alignment is: the front sight is centered in the rear sight and level with the top and positioned just below where you want the bullet to strike the target. The slang term for proper sight alignment is pumpkin on a post.





SIGHT PICTURE

Sight picture is what you will see or how you will see the sights. Human vision cannot focus on three different items at three different distances so we must pick one to focus on. The other two will appear a little blurry. Which one should we focus our vision on? Vision should be focused on the front sight. The rear sight and where the bullet will strike will look a little blurry.



ADJUSTING THE SIGHTS

Every weapon comes from the manufacture with the sights adjusted properly. No weapon has ever shot where it has not been aimed. Sight alignment and sight picture are the keys. Unless the sights are damaged, there should be no reason to adjust the sights. Many people adjust their sights to cover for bad sight alignment or improper trigger control.

If the sights have been damaged and need to be adjusted, it is the rear sight that is adjustable. The rear sight should be moved in the same direction that you want the bullet strike to move. For example, if the handgun is shooting to the left you want the strike to move to the right so move the rear sight to the right.

LOADING A HANDGUN

Prior to loading a handgun that is completely empty it should be inspected to ensure it is clean and a function check done.

REVOLVER: A revolver may then be loaded by placing a round into each charge hole in the cylinder and the weapon properly closed.

PISTOL: The pistol is completely empty and a magazine is fully loaded but not in weapon. There is also one extra loose round available. With weapon pointed in a safe direction insert the magazine into the magazine well. The finger should not be touching the trigger.

Seat the magazine into the magazine well by pushing it in until a click is heard. There is no need to slam the magazine into pistol as damage to the weapon or the magazine will occur. Rack the slide to insert one round into the chamber. Activate the magazine catch and remove magazine. The loose round may now be inserted into the top of the magazine. Re-insert the magazine into the pistol without slamming it in. You can make sure the magazine is properly seated by pulling on the floor plate. The pistol is now completely loaded.

ADMINISTRATIVE UNLOADING

A revolver may be unloaded by pointing the weapon in a safe direction and activating the thumb piece to open the cylinder. The muzzle should be pointed up and the rounds will fall out of the charge holes. To unload a pistol, remember that there is a live round in the chamber. With pistol pointed in a safe direction, lock slide to the rear. The support hand must not cover the ejection port and the loose round should fall on the floor, etc. Do not attempt to catch the loose round.

RELOADING

To reload a revolver it should be emptied just as with the administrative unloading. The extractor rod should be pressed to remove the empty brass while the muzzle is pointed up. The muzzle should now be pointed downward and new ammunition may be placed into the weapon and it closed properly.

For a pistol, when it is empty the slide should lock back. Obtain the spare magazine and while holding it properly, bring it towards the weapon. As it nears the weapon, release the empty magazine. The empty magazine will drop and it goes on the ground. Insert the new magazine into the pistol (do not slam it in) and using the support hand, release the slide forward just as when initially loading.

MALFUNCTIONS WITH A HANDGUN

Anything mechanical may fail at some time so it is important that handguns be inspected regularly. It is very rare that a revolver will malfunction while shooting. Bad ammunition may cause a problem but anything else will probably be something that has broken in the weapon and it must be fixed.

For a pistol it is another matter. There are many reasons a pistol may fail while shooting. The vast majority of malfunctions are caused by the shooter including the lack of cleaning, poor maintenance and improper grip while shooting. Bad magazines are the next leading cause. Clean and check the magazines on a regular basis just as the pistol.

Bad ammunition may also cause some malfunctions. Factory ammunition is recommended for use in pistols. Some manufacturer's warranties will be void if reloaded ammunition is used. Do not use lead bullets in a pistol. Metal jacketed rounds should be used.

Each time the trigger is pulled on a revolver, the cylinder rotates and a new round is struck by the firing pin. A pistol has four distinct operations that must be completed for each shot. Those four operations are to feed, fire, extract and eject. If any of these fail, it will cause a malfunction. The process to clear any malfunction while shooting a pistol is called "tap - rack."

- To properly perform the tap-rack the finger must come off of the trigger. The flat open support hand slaps the bottom of the magazine and the slide is racked just as when initially loading the weapon. It is important not to cover the ejection port as a bad round or an empty case has to leave the weapon. The weapon may be canted to the right to let gravity assist in removing anything from the pistol.

If either a fail to extract or fail to eject occurs, it is likely that a double feed condition will be created. There is one empty and one live round, both trying to occupy the same space. When this happens the slide will probably not be in battery and you will not be able to tap and rack. The remedy for a double feed is called "rip - work - tap - rack."

- Rip = remove the magazine. There will be one round partially in the weapon and partially in the magazine so it may be difficult to rip the magazine out. Point the weapon in a safe direction and the finger must be off the trigger. Press the magazine catch and grab the floor plate of the magazine to pull it out.
- Work = work the action back and forth rapidly at least twice.
- Tap-rack = same as above, but includes re-inserting the magazine into the weapon. ■